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# Illustrations of medieval romance on tiles from Chertsey ...

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**ILLUSTRATIONS OF MEDIEVAL**  
**ROMANCE**

**ON**

**TILES FROM CHERTSEY ABBEY**

**BY**

**ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS**  
//

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## ILLUSTRATIONS OF MEDIEVAL ROMANCE

ON

# TILES FROM CHERTSEY ABBEY

**BY**

ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS

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## PREFACE

It is one of the pleasures of investigation that it brings one into touch with one's fellows on that most reasonable and profitable of planes—community of interest. It is one of the humiliations of publishing the results of one's research that so many debts incurred through this pleasant intercourse cannot be recorded on the title page, but in an unread preface.

To those scholars, whose works alone remain as a generous aid to further research, I make acknowledgment in the bibliography. The chief of my debts to these is that which I owe Dr. Manwaring Shurlock of Chertsey, without whose enterprise in recovering the tiles from destruction and decay these valuable monuments of art and literature might well have been lost. To his work, *Tiles from Chertsey Abbey*, I owe much information about the subject and twenty of the plates in this volume.

My investigation of the subject began at Oxford, where Mr. C. F. Bell of the Ashmolean Museum first brought the tiles to my attention, and where Prof. H. Oelsner favored me with his opinion in regard to the inscriptions. The authorities at the British Museum and the Museum of the Surrey Archaeological Society I wish to thank for permission cordially granted to examine their collections of the tiles. Especially do I wish to record my appreciation of the kindness and interest of Mr. R. L. Hobson, who not only allowed me free access to the fragments at the British Museum on several occasions but also undertook for me the task of securing tracings of many of them.

To Professor Lethaby, who was the first to put forward authoritative conclusions as to the origin of the tiles and their literary source, I owe the honor of frank criticism of some of my identifications and the striking suggestion that Thomas deliberately assigned to Tristram the arms of the English royal house. For this generous assistance I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude.

To Miss Lucy Wheeler of Chertsey, who at the last moment kindly undertook to make certain useful inquiries for me, and to Mr. St. Clair Baddeley of Painswick, Glos., who besides performing similar services, has extended me a most generous hospitality and sympathetic encouragement, I owe a very great debt.

To Prof. Kenneth McKenzie and Prof. N. C. Brooks I am obliged for reading the proofs.

Finally, to the University of Illinois, whose munificent encouragement of research has made this study possible, and which through the personal attention and encouragement of Dean David Kinley and Prof. W. A. Oldfather has rendered every assistance in its power, I wish to express my loyal appreciation.

ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS

May 23, 1916

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## I

No reader of medieval literature will need be told that among the romantic themes of medieval song and story none threw a more potent spell over the mind of Christendom than that of Tristram and Isolt. It was one of the earliest to express the feeling and philosophy of the new courtly love. It was also the most far reaching in its influence and the most enduring. Its impregnation of the fertile fancies of the medieval period bore fruit, as is well known, in many literary versions of the tale, written in many languages. Even more striking as an indication of its pervasive working is the rich flowering of the theme in medieval decorative art. Its scenes of passion and adventure had lingered in many creative minds. Those minds which expressed themselves through the medium of language embodied the scenes in various literary forms, aflame with emotion or glittering with the subtleties of casuistical sentiment. Minds given to plastic expression, though equally smitten doubtless by the dramatic poignancy of the tale, could not interpret feeling, but rendered with what skill was in each of them, through form and color and design, an imaginative vision of the great theme. Perhaps the most magnificent of these interpretations by imagery is the series of pictures which adorn the greater number of what are known as the Chertsey Tiles. To discuss these tiles in their various aspects will be the main object of this study. Before doing so, however, let me first, excluding the illuminated MSS., pass in review the numerous medieval illustrations of the Tristram romance. These so far exceed in number the extant illustrations of the other romances that they witness vividly to the overwhelming popularity of this tale with the patrons and producers of the decorative arts.<sup>1</sup>

The extant examples which I have been able to discover fall into two classes: those which occur as separate, individual scenes, and those which form groups or series. Of these series the earliest are the Chertsey Tiles, dating from 1270, which I have already referred to and with which later I shall concern myself at length. They derive their name

<sup>1</sup>The best general study of medieval art illustrative of the romances is that by von Schlosser in *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, XVI, pp. 156 ff. M. E. Hucher has written on *Les représentations de Tristan et Yseult dans les manuscrits du Moyen Age*, and reproductions from such manuscripts are found in many illustrated histories of medieval literatures. The list which I am about to give of Tristram illustrations outside the manuscripts owes a great deal to the previous list given by Prof. Golther in his book, *Tristan und Isolde in den Dichtungen des Mittelalters*, pp. 408-12.

from the fact that they were excavated from the site of Chertsey Abbey on the Thames. Most of the fragments are now stored in the British Museum. Of the forty-three designs of romantic subjects surviving in whole or in part, thirty-four probably illustrate the Tristram romance composed by the Anglo-Norman Thomas.<sup>2</sup>

The second series of illustrations occurs on an ivory casket, now preserved at the Hermitage Museum, Petrograd. It was made in northern France near the beginning of the fourteenth century. It contains ten scenes based mainly on Thomas, from the drinking of the potion to Tristram's revelation of himself to Isolt through the ring.<sup>3</sup>

The third is found on an embroidered hanging at the nunnery of Wienhausen in Hannover. It was probably made in that district between 1300 and 1325. It contains twenty two scenes, from Tristram's sallying to the fight with Morold to the potion scene, some apparently based on Eilhart von Oberg's version and others on that of Gottfried von Strassburg. At Wienhausen there are fragments of two other Tristram hangings of the same style and date.<sup>4</sup>

At Erfurt is preserved an embroidery intended as a table cover. Its date lies about 1350, and the workmanship is Thuringian. The twenty-six scenes, based on Eilhart, cover the events from the swallows' bringing of the golden hair to Mark's punishment of the dwarf.<sup>5</sup>

A German embroidered hanging of about the same date is kept at the South Kensington Museum. It contains thirteen scenes illustrating Tristram's slaying of the dragon, the treachery and discomfiture of the steward, and, as I conjecture, the tryst of the lovers at the fountain, and their discovery in the grotto.<sup>6</sup>

At the same place we find a Sicilian embroidered coverlet of the third quarter of the fourteenth century, which forms a pair with another coverlet preserved at Usella in Italy. Together they contain twenty two scenes, and treat the story from the departure of Tristram from King Ferramont to the wounding of Tristram by Amorold. The version followed by the designer cannot be any of the Italian versions now known.<sup>7</sup>

At the castle of St. Floret near Issoire in Auvergne is preserved a series of about forty mural paintings dating from the middle of the

<sup>2</sup>A bibliography is given on pp. 16 f.

<sup>3</sup>F. Michel, *Tristan*, I, p. lxxiii.

<sup>4</sup>H. W. H. Mithoff, *Archiv für Niedersachsens Kunstgeschichte*, II, p. 9, pl. II and VI.

<sup>5</sup>*Anzeiger für Kunde der Deutschen Vorzeit*, 1866, col. 14.

<sup>6</sup>D. Rock, *Textile Fabrics*, p. 77. Figured H. Jourdain, *English Secular Embroidery*, p. 20.

<sup>7</sup>*Romania*, 1913, p. 517.

fourteenth century. No adequate study has been made of them, but since one scene portrays the tryst of the lovers at the fountain, and the names, Forest Perilous, Morgan le Fay, Cornwall, and King Mark, are decipherable among the inscriptions, I conclude that at least a number of these paintings deal with the Tristram legend as told in the French prose romance.<sup>8</sup>

At the castle of Runkelstein near Bozen in the Tyrol are certain excellently preserved mural paintings of about 1400. There are three series in all, one illustrating *Garel von dem Blühenden Thal*, another *Wigalois*, and the third Gottfried's *Tristan*. Of the last series some have been destroyed, but reproductions, somewhat crude, of sixteen scenes have been published. They cover the story from the fight with Morold to Isolt's attempt to have Brangoene slain.<sup>9</sup>

Finally at the Kunstgewerbe Museum, Dresden, is to be found a tapestry of Alsatian workmanship dated 1539. It contains twenty one scenes, from the marriage of Ribalin to the drinking of the potion, and is based on a German prose romance printed at Augsburg in 1498.<sup>10</sup>

The scene of the tryst at the fountain, which I have already mentioned as occurring among the mural paintings at St. Floret, and which occurs also on the Petrograd casket, the Erfurt embroidery, and the Runkelstein paintings, enjoyed a peculiar independent popularity, being found frequently in medieval art isolated from any other illustrations of the Tristram legend.<sup>11</sup> The same scene is treated independently in literature also.<sup>12</sup> The story runs to the effect that Mark, suspecting

<sup>8</sup>*Mémoires Lus à la Sorbonne, Archéologie*, 1863, p. 67. C. Enlart, *Manuel d' Archéologie*, II, p. 165. Two scenes figured in Gellis-Didot, Laffillée, *Peinture Décorative en France*.

<sup>9</sup>Zingerle, Seelos, *Freskenzyklus des Schlosses Runkelstein*.

<sup>10</sup>*Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler des Königreichs Sachsen*, VIII, p. 62. *Germania*, XXVIII, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>The *motif* was incorporated with a number of other common art *motifs* in a French compilation called the *Cy Nous Dit*, and provided with a highly edifying moral. One such illumination is figured and the accompanying inscription published in the *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires du Centre*, II, pl. II, p. 18. The latter runs: "Ci nous dit coment une royne et uns chevaliers sestoient assiz soubz un arbre seur une fontaine pour parler de folles amours; et se prinstrent a parler de bien et de courtoisie parce quilz virent en la fontaine lombre dou rois qui les guaitoit desseur l'arbre. Se nous ne nous guardons de penser mal et dou faire, pour lamour de Nostre Segneur qui voit toutes nos pensees, nous garderions en nous sa paiz, si com la royne et li chevaliers garderent la paiz dou rois: quar pluseurs sont qui leurs segneurs temporelz guardent miex la paiz, qui ne les voit que par dehors, quilz ne font la paiz de Nostre Segneur qui toutes leurs pensees voit dedens et dehors."

<sup>12</sup>Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*, ed. Hertz, note 100.

the fidelity of his wife, and learning that she is to meet Tristram at a certain fountain, hides himself beforehand in a tree overhanging the trysting place. Tristram, arriving soon afterwards, happens to espy the reflection of Mark's face in the water (or, according to certain versions, the king's shadow on the ground). Isolte approaches, and seeing that Tristram offers no welcome, becomes alarmed and discovers in turn the presence of Mark. Together the lovers conspire so to upbraid each other that the royal spy is completely hoodwinked, and takes the first opportunity to recall them to the court.

This scene enjoyed a particular vogue with a school of ivory carvers in northern France, who, besides the Petrograd casket, produced other caskets where the meeting of the lovers at the fountain occurs among various scenes of a romantic character. Such caskets are to be found at the South Kensington Museum,<sup>13</sup> at the British Museum,<sup>14</sup> at Cracow Cathedral,<sup>15</sup> in the Hainauer Collection at Berlin (1911),<sup>16</sup> and in the Morgan Collection, now on loan at the Metropolitan Museum, New York.<sup>17</sup> Other examples of the subject carved in ivory by French craftsmen are three fourteenth century mirror cases, one formerly in the Collection Spitzer,<sup>18</sup> one in the Vatican Library,<sup>19</sup> the third in the Hotel de Cluny, and a comb of the early fifteenth century in the possession of the Bamberg Historical Society.<sup>20</sup> French too were the makers of a *cuir-bouilli* case for writing tablets at Namur,<sup>21</sup> a wooden box in the South Kensington Museum,<sup>22</sup> and a corbel at the house of Jacques Coeur at Bourges.<sup>23</sup> An English example of the subject occurs on a misericord at Chester cathedral,<sup>24</sup> and a German on a tapestry in the town hall of Regensburg.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>13</sup>W. Maskell, *Ivories in the South Kensington Museum*, p. 64.

<sup>14</sup>O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of Ivory Carvings in the British Museum*, p. 125. *Burlington Magazine*, V, p. 303.

<sup>15</sup>*Romanische Forschungen*, V, p. 241.

<sup>16</sup>*Revue de l'Art Chrétien*, 1911, p. 398. John Carter, *Specimens of Ancient Sculpture*.

<sup>17</sup>*Collection Spitzer*, I, pl. 21. An article by myself on this casket will appear shortly in *Art in America*.

<sup>18</sup>*Collection Spitzer*, I, p. 49. E. Molinier, *Arts Appliqués à l'Industrie*, I, pl. 29.

<sup>19</sup>*Gazette des Beaux Arts*, ser. III, vol. XXXIII, p. 399.

<sup>20</sup>Becker and Hefner, III, pl. 13. Suchier, Birch-Hirschfeld, *Französische Literatur*, ed. 1913, I, p. 115. Hefner Alteneck, ed. 2, vol. IV, pl. 252.

<sup>21</sup>Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire du Mobilier*, II, p. 157.

<sup>22</sup>No. 2173, '55.

<sup>23</sup>Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire de l'Architecture*, IV, p. 505.

<sup>24</sup>*Chester Archaeological Journal, New Series*, V, p. 52.

<sup>25</sup>*Germania*, XVIII, p. 276.

In a painting of three famous pairs of lovers at Runkelstein appear Tristram and Isolt.<sup>26</sup> Likewise on a Sicilian coverlet in the possession of the Marquis of Azzolino their figures were worked, but the upper halves have been cut off.<sup>27</sup>

It is a strange thing that when so many of the French tapestries of the fifteenth century which remain to us depict romantic material, none of them should deal with Tristram, nor do I know among the many such tapestries mentioned in contemporary inventories one on this subject. But that this neglect was characteristic of only a single craft is shown by the inventory, written in 1384 and 1385, of the enameled objects belonging to Louis, Duke of Anjou, which discloses a partiality for this theme among the workers in metal and enamel. It mentions two hanaps enameled with scenes from the romance, and another on which appear "Tristan et Ysieu et la teste du roy Marc en une arbre."<sup>28</sup> The same authority describes a salere of silver gilt, the foot of which consists of a tree, in which "est le roy marc, et dessous sont yseut et tristan, tout ouvree de taille tres delieement, et devant eulz, ou dit pie, a une piece de cristal en maniere de fontaine, et dedens ycelle fontaine pert la teste du Roy Marc."<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, not only do we have the literature of the Tristram theme and the reflections of that literature in medieval art, but also a number of literary references to those artistic reflections. The romance of *L'Escoufle* (date 1200-25) gives an elaborate description of a golden

<sup>26</sup>Zingerle, Seelos, *op. cit.*, pl. I.

<sup>27</sup>*Romania*, 1913, p. 562. While aiming at the inclusion in this list of all the illustrations of the romance extant, I have purposely omitted cases where the connection with Tristram has been rashly assumed. One such case is that of the mural paintings from the Palazzo Teri, preserved at San Marco, Florence, which are mentioned in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, ser. IV, vol. VI, p. 235, as treating this theme. Another is the frequently cited identification of a pair of lovers who among a number of others were painted on the walls of a house at Constance, now destroyed, and who should probably be identified instead as Paris and Helen. Vide *Mittheilungen der Antiquarischen Gesellschaft in Zürich*, XV, p. 228. A third consists in the association with Tristram of a number of conventional love scenes on an ivory comb figured in Suchier, Birch-Hirschfeld, *Französische Literatur*, ed. 1913, I, p. 117. The tapestry at Langensalza mentioned by A. Schultz in his *Deutsches Leben im XIV und XV Jahrhundert*, p. 91, has attached to it a fragmentary inscription bearing the names of the lovers but itself illustrates the legend of St. Eustace. Vide *Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Sachsen*, VI, p. 56. The existence of the misericord at Bristol cathedral referred to in the *Chester Archaeological Journal*, N. S., V, p. 52, has been denied by those of whom I have inquired.

<sup>28</sup>M. de Laborde, *Notice des Émaux du Musée du Louvre*, II, Nos. 348, 370, 563.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, II, No. 512.

hanap, worth ten marks, on which were enameled five scenes from the lives of these famous lovers.<sup>30</sup> Their figures appeared also in a gold cup described by the troubadour Peire Cardinal (*fl.* 1210-30);<sup>31</sup> on the painted arson of a saddle described by the Catalan Guillem Torelha (*ca.* 1250);<sup>32</sup> on a cloth described in *Floriant and Florete* (1250-75);<sup>33</sup> on a jeweled cloth described in *Emaré* (1350-1400);<sup>34</sup> and in mural paintings described in the Italian *Intelligenza* (14th century),<sup>35</sup> in Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* (1382†),<sup>36</sup> and in Lydgate's *Temple of Glas* (1403†).<sup>37</sup>

## II

The tiles from Chertsey Abbey possess an interest greater than all the other artistic treatments of the Tristram story. In the first place, there is an odd irony in the fact that these illustrations of a theme which exalted the indulgence of unsanctified passion should have been so conspicuously displayed in buildings from which all thought of passion, sanctified or unsanctified, was theoretically banished. The tiles, furthermore, exceed in numbers, if we exclude the manuscripts, any other series of illustrations of this subject. Then too, there is their early date: even the Munich manuscript is later. In the fourth place, the tiles are remarkable for their fidelity to the Anglo-Norman version by Thomas, as far as we are able to reconstruct it from fragments that remain and the various redactions based upon it. Finally, it is no exaggeration to say that they stand high among the remaining monuments of the best period of Gothic art. Prof. W. R. Lethaby says of the figure designs, "They must have been drawn by one of the ablest masters of the second half of the thirteenth century:"<sup>38</sup> and of the pattern tiles, "They are as fine of their kind as the picture tiles."<sup>39</sup> Of the pavement in its completeness the same eminent authority declares, "The Chertsey tiles were the most remarkable works of the kind made in England, and none are known in France which can compete with them."<sup>40</sup> Mr. R. L. Hobson

<sup>30</sup>Pub. Soc. des Anc. Textes Fr., II. 579 ff.

<sup>31</sup>Mahn, *Gedichte der Troubadours*, IV, p. 89.

<sup>32</sup>Mila y Fontanals, *Poètes Catalans*, p. 12.

<sup>33</sup>Pub. Roxburghe Club, II. 843 ff.

<sup>34</sup>Ed. E. Rickert, I. 134.

<sup>35</sup>Ed. P. Gellrich, p. 147.

<sup>36</sup>L. 290.

<sup>37</sup>L. 77.

<sup>38</sup>*Annual of the Walpole Society*, II, p. 70.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 77.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 79.

of the British Museum speaks of the same as "one of the finest, if not the finest, inlaid pavement in existence."<sup>41</sup>

The history of the discovery and collecting of the tiles has been told before, but must here be repeated in its main outlines. After the dissolution of the monasteries, Chertsey Abbey, a Benedictine foundation, mentioned by Bede as early as the seventh century, underwent the usual process of spoliation. The masonry became a quarry for the neighborhood, and the monuments and decorative furnishings were marred, scattered, or destroyed. Today on the site scarcely a vestige is left of one of the richest and most splendid of English monasteries. In 1853 Dr. Manwaring Shurlock, a surgeon with antiquarian tastes, came to live at Chertsey, and his ardent interest in a number of tile fragments, found in a heap of debris, led to the organization of a fund for excavating the site of the abbey church. In 1861 the abbey estate changed hands, and under the supervision of the new owner, Mr. Angell, and with the support of the Surrey Archaeological Society, the whole site of church and chapter house was exposed and many more fragments added to the collection. Dr. Shurlock, meanwhile, had pushed his search in the neighborhood, and rescued odd bits from dredgings in the Thames, the pavement of a pigsty, and other sources. He undertook the piecing together of all these materials, and discovered from broken inscriptions that some of the tiles dealt with Tristram and some with Richard Coeur de Lion. After a period of consultation and communication with Sir Gilbert Scott, Albert Way, Baron de Cosson, and Paulin Paris, he published in 1885 *Tiles from Chertsey Abbey*, which included numerous large lithographic plates of the tile designs and an explanatory text embodying the suggestions and expert testimony of these archaeologists and philologues. It is a handsome volume, and though the identifications and archaeological comment are now to a considerable extent obsolete, yet it is more thorough-going and accurate than anything preceding it.

The great bulk of the tile fragments thus gathered together are kept in the stores of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities at the British Museum, including those which at first belonged to the Architectural Museum. A small collection is to be found at the museum of the Surrey Archaeological Society at Guildford, and one fragment at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Several interesting pieces found their way at some unknown period into the church of Little Kimble, Bucks., and were laid down in 1872 in the chancel floor. A number of rather insignificant bits were purchased about 1825 and laid down to pave a summer house on what is now Sir Albert Rollit's estate, St. Ann's Hill, Chertsey. There are small private collections, which I have not

<sup>41</sup>R. L. Hobson, *Catalogue of English Pottery*, p. 40.

seen, in the possession of Capt. Lindsay of Sutton Courtney, Berks., and Lord Granby.

Meanwhile in the year 1870 during excavations on the site of Halesowen Abbey near Birmingham, a number of tile fragments, apparently made with local clay but from the same moulds as those at Chertsey, were discovered. There were also other tiles, and one (figured Shurlock, pl. 35, Wheeler, p. 38) depicting a seated abbot and bearing the inscription, ISTUD OPUS NICHOLAS MATRI CHRISTI DEDIT ABBAS, is of special interest. Since Abbot Nicholas of Halesowen died in 1298, a *terminus ad quem* for the laying of the Halesowen pavement is fixed. There were no inscriptions found here that had reference to the romance tiles. The subjects seem to have been derived from the romance of Tristram alone and not from that of the Lion Heart. The tiles found at Halesowen in whole or in part are those figured in the following plates of the present study: 4, 5, 7, 9, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26. Mr. J. R. Holliday, who conducted the work here, and who now has the fragments in his possession, gave a generally reliable account of them in the *Transactions of the Birmingham and Midland Institute* for 1871, p. 65. He has informed me that at one time in the church of St. Kenelm, near Halesowen, one of these tiles had formed a part of the pavement within the altar rails, but on a visit there in 1912 I found it gone and highly glazed modern productions in its place.

### III

Since the discovery of the tiles a number of notices and publications have been devoted to them, without, however, making their existence known beyond the circle of British architects and antiquaries. Of these publications the standard is the already mentioned *Tiles from Chertsey Abbey* by Manwaring Shurlock in 1885. A more up-to-date account of the manufacture and technical qualities of the tiles is found in the official *Catalogue of English Pottery in the British Museum*, by R. L. Hobson, pp. 40 ff. The most scholarly discussion of the archaeology and literary relations of the tiles is an article by Prof. W. R. Lethaby, in the *Annual of the Walpole Society* (London), II (1913), pp. 69 ff. These three may be said to constitute the chief authorities. For the Halesowen Tiles the article by J. R. Holliday in the *Transactions of the Birmingham and Midland Institute*, 1871, p. 65, is the sole authority.

The earliest extended and illustrated account of the designs appeared in *Specimens of Tile Pavements*, by Henry Shaw, 1858, of which pl. XIII-XXII depict a number of Chertsey examples. Other notices are to be found as follows:

*Surrey Archaeological Collections*, I, p. 115. *Some Account of the Encaustic Tiles and Stone Coffins Excavated on the Site of Chertsey Abbey in 1855*, by W. W. Pocock.

*Surrey Archaeological Collections*, VII, p. 288. *Chertsey Tiles*, by Major Heales.

*The Builder*, 1858, p. 502. *What We Learn from the Chertsey Tiles*, by W. Burges.

*The Building News*, 1878, p. 290. *Note on the Chertsey Tiles*, by R. Druce. Accompanied by plates.

Lucy Wheeler, *Romance Tiles of Chertsey Abbey*. Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co. 1913.

*Modern Language Review*, 1915, p. 304. *A Sidelight on the Tristan of Thomas*, by R. S. Loomis.

*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 1915, p. 509. *Richard Coeur de Lion and the "Pas Saladin" in Medieval Art*, by R. S. Loomis.

#### IV

The tiles depicting romantic subjects, with which we are mainly concerned, are for the most part round and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter. Some of the subjects, however, which are found on round tiles are also found on square tiles, accompanied by two decorative pilasters on each side. Indeed, some of the designs, viz. Figs. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, seem to have been specially adapted to a rectangular frame. The material and manufacture of the tiles is thus described by Mr. Hobson: "The red clay tile was stamped with the pattern, and the cavities filled with white clay, and the whole coated with a transparent yellowish lead glaze. . . . From the presence of a metallic oxide, whether accidental or intentional, the surface frequently became dark green or black with the firing, sometimes graduated from the usual red brown to black: the artist made skilful use of this to vary the surface and by clever counter-changing, especially of the smaller tiles, he avoided any monotony of effect."<sup>42</sup>

When the pavement was laid down, the round tiles were sometimes fitted into a circular band of grotesque monsters, but generally into an inscription describing the subject. Examples of these may be seen on the following page. Since, however, the inscriptions have been invariably separated from the pictorial tiles, they have in no case afforded any clue to the identification. The round tiles encircled by the inscriptions were in turn framed by tiles of various shapes adorned

<sup>42</sup>R. L. Hobson, *op. cit.*, p. 41.



BORDER TILES

with exquisite foliage patterns of a conventionalized type. Foliage tiles of a similar or identical patterns have been found on the sites of Hailes, Haughmond, and Waverley Abbeys, at Cowdray, and in Westminster chapter house. Many small round tiles with head designs on them formed a part of the great decorative scheme. There were also discovered at Chertsey a series of small rectangular tiles representing the Signs of the Zodiac, and another bearing the Labors of the Months. For details of these the reader must consult Shurlock and Hobson.

Besides all these a large design of three figures under a canopy was pieced together, of which at least seven copies must have been made, since Shurlock testifies to having had in his possession seven pieces bearing the same portion of one figure. Though the panel has no connection with the series which are the special subject of this study, it may be well to quote Prof. Lethaby's comment: "It has been said that the figures cannot be those of saints, for they are without nimbus; but the crouching figures on which the king and the archbishop stand show that they were martyrs, probably St. Thomas and St. Edmund. . . . They are later in style than the romance tiles, and can hardly be earlier than about 1310-20. They must represent a queen (Isabelle?) between two saints. The queen carries a squirrel, a fashion of the fourteenth century."<sup>43</sup>

The assumption made by Prof. Lethaby that the tiles are of English manufacture runs counter to the theory stated in Shurlock that they were imported from France. The only serious piece of evidence submitted in support of the French origin is the dogmatic statement of Paulin Paris: "The inscriptions of the history of Tristram are in the French language, not in the Anglo-Norman dialect, but in very good French of Picardy or Artois."<sup>44</sup> Prof. H. Oelsner of Oxford, however, to whom I submitted transcripts of practically all the accessible inscriptions, said that it was not possible to determine the question of dialect from the literally fragmentary evidence. A weighty consideration in favor of English origin is the fact that the designer used the Anglo-Norman romance as the basis of his Tristram scenes and what must have been either an Anglo-Norman or English text as the basis of his Richard scenes. The very presence of Richard at all in the work of a French artist of this period is improbable. Finally the opinion of connoisseurs, once divided as to the style of the designs, is now agreed that it is characteristically English, and Prof. Lethaby but adds his voice to those of other authorities.

<sup>43</sup>*Annual of the Walpole Society*, II, pp. 76 f.

<sup>44</sup>M. Shurlock, *Tiles from Chertsey Abbey*, p. 10.

## V

It is to Prof. Lethaby alone, however, that we owe not only the one serious contribution to the early history of the tiles but also a contribution which is suggestive of striking conclusions. I can do no better than quote his words: "In the chapter house at Westminster Abbey there still remains the original tiled floor laid down between 1253 and 1258. Some of these are picture tiles, others are patterns, and there are inscriptions made up of separate letters like some of those at Chertsey. The Westminster tiles are perhaps a little earlier in style, but they are closely akin to the Chertsey tiles. They must have been made at the same place by the same able artist . . . They are similar in thickness and technique, and the style of drawing and the rendering of drapery are alike in both sets. The throned kings are almost identical in both, and the two huntsmen at Westminster are closely like the figures of Tristram. The harps and hands of the harpers are similar in both. We have seen above that at Westminster there is one detached tile<sup>45</sup> exactly like those which form the great ornamental squares at Chertsey, and this gives us a direct link of connection between the royal works and the Chertsey tiles. Again it is known that the tiles at Westminster were brought by water, possibly from Windsor.<sup>46</sup> Fragments of Chertsey tiles<sup>47</sup> have recently been found at Hailes Abbey, which was built by Richard of Cornwall, brother of Henry III, the builder of Westminster Abbey. Now Chertsey is close to Windsor, and must have often been visited by the king.<sup>48</sup> . . . The duel of King Richard and Saladin, as we have seen, was a favorite royal subject, and some border patterns are designed with castles and fleur de lis, and others with crowns. . . . The floor of the Westminster chapter house, by the same artist, was laid down for the king, and his brother used Chertsey tiles at Hailes; it is not unlikely therefore that the Chertsey floor was a royal gift. . . . If we date the tiles of Abbot Nicholas c. 1280-90 and the tiles of Westminster chapter house 1255, the romance tiles may be dated 1260-70. . . . They were made in the South of England, probably at Chertsey itself; one point in proof of this is the great variety of tiles used at the Abbey, some being manifestly later than others in date."<sup>49</sup> Miss Wheeler speaks of the estate of Sandgates, with the adjacent district of Hanworth, on the South-

<sup>45</sup>Foliage pattern.

<sup>46</sup>Or from Chertsey itself, if that was the seat of the tile factory.

<sup>47</sup>Foliage pattern. *Vide* St. Clair Baddeley, *A Cotswold Shrine*.

<sup>48</sup>*Annual of the Walpole Society*, II, p. 78.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 79.

ern border of Chertsey, as "most probably the site of the medieval potteries."<sup>50</sup> What basis there is for this supposition I cannot say.

To recur to the matter of date, it must be said that until a really scientific history of costume, based on accurately datable sources, such as we have for the later Middle Ages in Druitt's *Costume on Brasses*, is provided for the early Middle Ages as well, the attempt to fix closely the dates of the monuments of art must be ineffectual. It is certainly a discredit to archaeological scholarship that after a hundred years of study the date of so important a monument as the Bayeux "Tapestry" can be placed by different writers at opposite ends of a period of seventy-five years. In the case of the tiles, however, while the pinning down of the date with precision must await the publication of such a scientific history of costume, yet we may place them tentatively at about the year 1270, with some assurance that we are not more than ten years out of the way. Baron de Cosson contributed to Shurlock's work a discussion of the armor represented on the tiles, and came to the conclusion that it was of a type worn in England between 1270 and 1280, and that the earlier of these dates is nearer the truth. He was probably led to date the tiles somewhat too late by the fact that he believed that ailettes, such as are represented on pl. 16 and 43, were not worn before 1274. The Psalter of St. Louis, however, which can be dated between the years 1252 and 1270, depicts ailettes of a very similar character.<sup>51</sup> The costume I take to be slightly later than that depicted in the Painted Chamber at Westminster, executed between 1262 and 1277.<sup>52</sup> In this masterpiece of medieval decoration the great helm does not frequently appear, nor does the ailette, save once<sup>53</sup> when the form suggests that it was inserted in a late restoration. As in the tile designs the poleyns or knee-cops are absent, and housings for the destriers seem reserved for kings only. The evidence put forward by Prof. Lethaby and the evidence of the costume combine to show that the tiles were designed in the last years of the reign of Henry III, the connoisseur king. They may even have been a royal gift to the Abbey of Chertsey. But the markedly secular and, for the medieval church at least, immoral character of the theme treated has suggested to Mr. Burges and Prof. Lethaby that their original destination was not a monastery, but a prince's palace. It may even be that it was not the bounty of Henry that brought these romance tiles to Chertsey, but the accession to the throne (1272) of the bluff warrior Edward I, which

<sup>50</sup>Lucy Wheeler, *Romance Tiles from Chertsey Abbey*, p. 33.

<sup>51</sup>*Psautier de St. Louis*, ed. H. Omont, pl. XLVI, XLVIII, LIII, LXXV.

<sup>52</sup>*Burlington Magazine*, VII, p. 260.

<sup>53</sup>*Vetusta Monumenta*, VI, pl. 35, fig. 12.

left the tiles commissioned by his father on the hands of the abbey. Such a theory, however, involves too many assumptions to be anything more than a surmise. In either case the monastic authorities seem to have adjusted their scruples to the admission of these magnificent illustrations of a passionate romance within the walls of their most sacred edifice: nor did the chapter of Halesowen, some few years later, hesitate to follow suit.

Prof. Lethaby's theory of a connection between these tiles and a series of illustrations of Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan* in a MS. at Munich is, in my opinion, not so fortunate.<sup>54</sup> I have not, it is to be confessed, had access either to the MS. or to the collections of photographs from it at the South Kensington Museum since the question came to my attention, but I have seen a number of reproductions.<sup>55</sup> These do not present any resemblance in artistic style, in choice or treatment of incident, which is not accounted for by the fact that their respective designers followed related literary versions of the story and were guided by those artistic traditions for handling the different types of subject which, despite their variations, were yet so uniform for the whole of Europe.

## VI

Of primary importance, however, among the decorative works of the period for purposes of comparison are the little square tiles from Westminster chapter house already referred to in the quotation from Professor Lethaby. Although I am not convinced that they were made by the same artist as the Chertsey designs, yet the art is strikingly similar. Reproductions of these Westminster tiles are found in Prof. Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen*, pp. 50-53.

Another work that may not unprofitably be compared with the Chertsey Tiles is the Painted Chamber at Westminster Palace, already alluded to, executed at King Henry's orders between the years 1262 and 1277. Two of the King's painters, Master Walter and Master William, the latter a monk of Westminster Abbey, were employed on this magnificent work.<sup>56</sup> It is described by two Franciscans who saw it in 1322 as "that celebrated chamber on whose walls all the warlike histories of the whole Bible are painted with inexpressible skill, and explained by a regular and complete series of texts, beautifully written in French over each battle, to

<sup>54</sup>*Annual of the Walpole Society*, II, p. 70.

<sup>55</sup>Vogt and Koch, *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte*, p. 123; Könnecke, *Bilderatlas*, ed. 2, p. 57; Schultz, *Höfisches Leben*, ed. 2, vol. I, pp. 147, 166, 276, 316, 323, 424.

<sup>56</sup>*Burlington Magazine*, VII, pp. 260 and 269.

the no small admiration of the beholder and the increase of royal magnificence." Although the remains of these paintings were destroyed by fire in 1834, two sets of copies made from them still exist. One set was reproduced in *Vetusta Monumenta*, vol. VI. Oddly enough, few resemblances can be noted between them and the designs of the Chertsey Tiles.

Another English work of considerably greater interest in this connection is the manuscript of the *Lives of the Offas*, MS. Cotton, Nero D 1, in the British Museum. The illuminations have generally been attributed to the hand of Matthew Paris himself, but the armor depicted seems to be of far too advanced a type to have been drawn by a man who died in 1259. There are among the illuminations many which betray a close resemblance to the tile designs, and in such cases I have called attention to the fact in my treatment of the individual tiles. A very large number of the illuminations were reproduced, somewhat crudely, by Strutt in his *Horda Angelcynna*, vol. I.

A much smaller series of illuminations of English workmanship which show interesting parallels to the tiles are those found in the *Vie de St. Thomas*, handsomely reproduced in photogravure by the Société des Anciens Textes Français. These were probably made about the year 1250.

Another interesting work to be considered in this connection is the exquisitely illuminated *Psautier de St. Louis*, made in France between the years 1252 and 1270. In the discussion of the individual tiles reference will occasionally be made to the series of reproductions of this manuscript edited by H. Omont and published by the Bibliothèque Nationale.

## VII

An examination of the round and square tiles portraying scenes of a romantic character makes it evident that there are two distinct series. One series is composed entirely of round tiles, baked in separate quarters, and displaying a circular line around the design. Of these designs two or three depict legendary episodes from the life of Richard I, and the remainder depict miscellaneous scenes of hunt or combat unrelated to any specific story. The other series consists of round or square tiles baked entire, and in the case of the round tiles shows no encircling line. These all are probably connected with the romance of Tristram. A few differences of technique may be detected, I believe, between the two series, though whether they are attributable to the original designer or merely to the cutter of the moulds is a question hardly capable of solution. On the tiles of the former series, the horses

are more skilfully drawn, and the drapery has a flourish as if it were caught by the wind.

## VIII

The lettering of the inscriptions which accompany the tiles seems to differ in the two series. The style of letters in both was Lombardic. But those which accompanied the Richard group were larger, and were not attached to the border tiles, as were the smaller. They were, moreover, distinguished by little drops attached to their curves and were therefore of the type called pearl lettering. The inscriptions composed of large letters seem to have been Latin, whereas the smaller letters were made up into French words. From these lettered fragments little of value has been gleaned except the mere discovery of the romance cycles to which they related. Out of the larger letters REX RICARDUS, LEO, and perhaps BACULO have been put together. Among the smaller letters the names TRISTRAM, MORGAN, MARC, MOREHAUT or MORHAUT, and SIRE RO(ALD?) have been detected. The inscriptions "EN LA MER EN UNE" and "SANS GOVERNAIL" probably refer to the solitary voyage of the wounded Tristram to Ireland, Fig. 20. Other guesses might be made, but without much profit. Opposite I give a transliteration of all the inscriptions of more than two letters which I have noted down. It may be well to explain that a question mark indicates that the preceding letter is partly effaced and doubtful, and that a dash signifies a totally effaced letter.

## IX

I have already foreshadowed above the conclusions I have come to in regard to the literary sources of these tiles. Dr. Shurlock tells us that having recognized the name of Tristram frequently repeated and also Rex Ricardus he undertook "to read the medieval romances of Richard Coeur de Lion and Sir Tristram."<sup>57</sup> That he went to the best book in the case of the Richard story cannot be doubted, for although the two or three designs probably went back to earlier and simpler forms of the traditions than those to be found in the romance, yet those traditions are recognizable in the later redaction. In the case of the Tristram story Dr. Shurlock was not so fortunate. As Thomas himself says:

"Entre ceus qui solent cunter  
E del cunte Tristran parler  
Il en cuntent diversement."

<sup>57</sup>P. 9.

# LARGE INSCRIPTIONS

At British Museum:

F(?)IGI GR MāG QVb F:AR RICĀ PERIT Cō:P VIRā DERE  
ACCI MōS MĪA LES +FOR TIS L(?)EO BEL DED DIT TV  
BAC GVS REX VLO SEI CAR TVS DET ORĀ TEG AVD  
SCO RDO Gv: OMI QVI: CVS HIC HĀS GLI FRE PP

# SMALL INSCRIPTIONS

At British Museum:

+CI:REPRENT:IS\* :ED:LAM-R:EDUDE SAUUA6E:m:LIURE  
D6L6Rā UR:MADDE:LEREI(?) PRIAT:R-L:UĭāG6A C6IT:  
IR-TUS:-S AUT:S G6T ITIS T:Iv LEU:EA ODIS OT6 IRR  
E:t TV:U D02E AUT:āP G6:PI :SI:LI:Fā CH6E: :LEO-M  
A(?)RDISE: MARC E:DE:SE: :LE:MORE S:DENS :DE: 026h  
T6ST IRE:K6:PUI MADā M:E:L6:M L6:FāT OC-IR LAM02  
+SĀM TAIL6 āBLE 6t6 06:LĀ:PLĀ ER6:AD LĒ:I SC6  
SIRE:RO 026AUT :ĀRES SĀMĀ-U ĩD0S?S6 PERIT:UD GAI  
MOR6AD:E:SE:G6T DE:ED:EDGLĀRE DT:D(?)IMIDIVOR:D T:SUMP  
ORA CRU E:nU 6U6 02T :RI6: 6UT RIS D:ED TUT:6  
ID6 DE:S MILITIS SITO:ān

At South Kensington Museum:

S:GUVDAIL T:ED:LA:BATAILE R(?)PIA:LAU RE:ALREI +SĀm:  
E-SA:POL UR:MADDE:L6:RE SI:UIXISS6

At Museum of Surrey Archaeological Society, Guildford:

SC6:†SĀm m02h ĀSUO:QV vOT6ś:P I6:A:LAU IS:-C

At Little Kimble, Bucks.

GLAYS:6: :SĀS:GOVDAIL

At St Ann's Hill, Chertsey:

E:†S\* ADCH 6L6: TLEND6

And it was Dr. Shurlock's mischance to have used in his task of identification a wrong form of the "cunte Tristan".

Strange to say, he knew of and seems to have read fragments of the Anglo-Norman poem by Thomas, which was the version used by the designer of the tiles. For Paulin Paris, whom he had consulted in regard to his task of identification, had referred him to the fragments published by Francisque Michel as a possible source for the Chertsey designs, and he himself makes a quotation from them on p. 19. By an odd chance, however, all those fragments belonged to the end of the poem, and nearly all the tiles were concerned with the beginning, and accordingly he did not discover the relationship between them, nor if he had, would the fragments have helped him in the work of identification. So Dr. Shurlock went to Sir Walter Scott's edition of *Sir Tristrem*, a degenerate descendent of Thomas's poem. The result was that at least a third of the plates in his elaborate work are wrongly identified.

Since the time of Paulin Paris the researches of scholars have added a great deal to our knowledge of the Tristram cycle. It has been shown that Thomas wrote about the year 1170, probably in England, certainly for an English audience. In 1878, seven years before the publication of Shurlock's book, Kölbing had declared that the Norse Saga of Tristram was manifestly a translation of Thomas.<sup>58</sup> When in 1902 M. Bédier re-edited for the Société des Anciens Textes Français the Thomas fragments first published by Michel, he was able to fill in the gaps of the story, partly from the *Tristan* of Gottfried von Strassburg and the English *Sir Tristrem*, but mainly from the Norwegian Saga.

I have gathered from M. Bédier's two volumes the following statements in regard to the Saga and its relation to the poem of Thomas. The Saga "est une imitation directe, en prose norroise, du *Tristan* de Thomas. Elle a été composée en l'an 1226, sur l'ordre du roi de Danemark Haakon V. Le remanieur est ce même frère Robert qui traduisit aussi, pour ce roi grand amateur de romans français, la chanson d'*Élie de Saint-Gilles*."<sup>59</sup> . . . "Le *Saga* est notre témoin le plus sûr du poème de Thomas."<sup>60</sup> . . . "Ce que frère Robert conserve de l'original, il le rend mot pour mot, abrégeant à peine, çà et là, le récit."<sup>61</sup> "Il a rejeté nombre d'épisodes, de faits, d'actes des personnages. Mais il a rejeté ou réduit plus volontiers encore précisément ce qui faisait le prix du poème français: ces discours sentimentaux, ces dissertations

<sup>58</sup>E. Kölbing, *Tristansage*, I, p. CXXXV.

<sup>59</sup>Société des Anciens Textes Français, Thomas, *Tristan*, I, Avant Propos, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 64.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 70.

morales chères à Thomas, son émotion, son lyrisme, le jeu maladroit et joli de sa préciosité.<sup>762</sup>

Now while these features which M. Bédier has just mentioned may be considered what is most precious in the *Tristan* of Thomas, yet their omission by Brother Robert does not embarrass us in the least in determining the subjects of the tiles, on which sentimental discourses and moral dissertations cannot be portrayed. The rejected episodes and abridged descriptions, the number of which I am inclined to think M. Bédier in his reconstruction exaggerates, do, of course, and always will present difficulties to one who essays such a task of identification. It may well be that certain tiles depict details which the Saga has omitted.

There are, as I have already said, at least two, perhaps three tiles which are based upon the romantic traditions which clustered round the name of Richard Coeur de Lion. The historic prowess of that hero furnished as it were a solid trunk around which, like a gorgeous parasite, the fanciful tales of still more marvelous exploits twined themselves. In their earliest literary forms most of these traditions have been lost, but we have references to them in the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth a number of the most popular episodes were incorporated in the Middle English romance of *Richard Coeur de Lion*. They were worked up with some imaginative elaboration and force of style by a minstrel of southern Lincolnshire, and interpolated by him here and there in the body of a rimed chronicle translated into the Kentish dialect from the Anglo-Norman.<sup>63</sup> This composite product is, of course, later than the Chertsey Tiles and therefore could not have been the source of the designs. As I have shown, however, in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XXX, pp. 509 ff., the fabulous parts of the poem include the two stories which in an earlier and simpler form served as the inspiration of these few tiles. We have evidence that one of the stories was current and in high royal favor as early as 1250. For according to the Liberate Rolls of that year, Henry III gave orders to have the history of Antioch and the "duellum Regis Ricardi" painted in his own chamber at the palace of Clarendon. I have already quoted Prof. Lethaby to the effect that this king's predilection for the subject is not without its significance in guessing at the *fons et origo* of this magnificent pavement. Another of these early traditions, which in a simpler form was probably the basis of one of the tiles, is narrated at length in the Middle English romance. We cannot, then, in the case of these Richard designs come as close to the literary version employed by the designer as we can in the case of the

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, II, p. 75.

<sup>63</sup>I hope to publish a full statement of my conclusions in regard to this romance in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, July, 1916.

Tristram pictures: but since it is at most a matter of identifying only three designs, and these not hard to recognize, there is little to regret.

The remaining tiles have not in my opinion any specific literary source. The heraldic charges, the chevron and the carbuncle, which appear on two of them, do not necessarily have any intentional reference. Many shields of anonymous warriors which are depicted in illuminations were obviously blazoned at the artist's whim. When, moreover, as many as six designs are of one general character and show no distinctive details, it is safe to assume that their lack of specific reference is intentional. It is scarcely necessary to say that such groups of *genre* subjects are common in medieval art. Ivory combs and writing tablets, gemellions and caskets from Limoges frequently display the amusements and the lovemaking of courtly folk without a hint of historical or literary reference. On the wings of a triptych in the Morgan Collection, now on loan at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, are to be seen enameled roundels depicting just such scenes as those we are considering. There are exploits of the chase and a judicial combat, again without sign of literary derivation. Accordingly, while further study may advantageously be applied to the identification of the scenes in the Tristram series, attempts, such as those of Shaw and Shurlock, to connect tiles of this group with historic or legendary persons are bound to be futile.

Dr. Shurlock's draughtsman, a Mr. Lucas, in many cases did not make accurate copies of the tiles. Accordingly wherever the fragments at the British Museum have been sufficient to make possible a reconstruction, Mr. C. O. Waterhouse has executed new and accurate drawings, which have been reproduced in this work. In twenty cases, however, Shurlock's plates have had to be relied on. One figure is reproduced from Shaw's *Specimens of Tile Pavements*.

## X

Let us now examine each individual tile, as reproduced in the plates, note its features, and try to arrive at an identification. The identification of the designs in the Tristram series will be based, except when otherwise noted, on the Norwegian translation of Thomas's *Tristan*, edited and translated into German by E. Kölbing. The great assistance afforded by M. Bédier's reconstruction of Thomas must not pass unacknowledged.



FIG. 1. AFTER SHURLOCK  
KANELANGRES RECEIVES A MESSENGER (?)



FIG. 2. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM PLAYS CHESS WITH THE NORSEMAN

## FIGURE 1

This tile represents two men in long robes, facing each other. The one on the left, who wears a hood, is handing to the other a letter with a seal attached.

I suggest with hesitancy that the incident depicted is that mentioned in ch. XIII of the Saga: "When he (Kanelangres or Rivalen, the father of Tristram) had recovered his health, a messenger came to him from his realm and brought him tidings from his kinsmen and vassals that the Bretons were harrying his land, slaughtering his liegemen, and burning his towns."

Shurlock's suggestion that we identify the scene with one referred to in the romance of Richard Coeur de Lion, where the Bishop of Chester and the Abbot of St. Albans bring sealed letters to the Lion Heart is ruled out by two considerations of weight: the tile does not show the encircling border line characteristic of the Richard series, nor is either of the persons clad in the ecclesiastical garb without which no medieval artist would have portrayed a bishop or abbot.

The design should be compared with a similar design from the *Lives of the Offas*, which Strutt figures in *Horda Angelcynna*, I, pl. XLIV, 1. The figures and costumes show resemblance to those in Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 25.

## FIGURE 2

We see here a boat on the water, and in the boat a youth and a person whose figure is defaced, seated with a chess board between them. In the stern another youth sits, and a fourth person is steering with an oar. A bird is perched on the stern. This tile without question represents Tristram playing chess with the Norse merchants.

While Tristram was under the care of Roald, he obtained leave for himself and his fosterbrothers to go down to the haven, where a merchant from Norway had cast anchor. Roald bought for the boys seven hawks. The story as continued in ch. XVIII of the Saga runs: "Tristram spied there a chess board and asked if any of the merchants would play with him. One declared himself ready, and they fixed the stakes, laying a great sum on the issue. When now his foster-father saw that he sat at the chess board, he said to him, 'My son, I am going home, but thy tutor may wait with thee and accompany thee home when thou art ready.' . . . While he was sitting so absorbed in the game, in all secrecy they drew up cable and anchor and let the ship glide out of the bay."

## FIGURE 3

This tile represents a group of figures: the first, kneeling, grasps with one hand a forked stick with two pieces of flesh attached to the prongs, while with the other hand he points back to the second figure, a youth clad in a mantle, with a fillet about his hair, carrying a glove in one hand; behind these, two other figures stand, one of whom is bearded, wears a peaked hat and slavin, has a scrip at his side and a bourdon in his hand. There can be no doubt that the central figure is Tristram, and the scene his presentation to Mark as a stranger who has displayed great skill in venerye. The right hand figure is one of the courtiers holding the "stake-gift". On the left are the two pilgrims.

It will be remembered that Tristram, set ashore by the merchants in an unknown land, meets two pilgrims, and then falls in with some huntsmen. Seeing them set about the dissection of their quarry in a clumsy fashion, he offers to instruct them in the art. Brother Robert, after describing in ch. XXI a part of his operations, goes on to say: "Then Tristram prepared a long branch, and fastened thereon the heart, kidneys, liver, lungs, and haunches. . . . Thereupon he went into the wood and tore off as long a bough as he could, yet such that one might bear it in his hand, and bound to this bough the branch to which he had fixed the best titbits he had taken from the stag, and bound the head on the top and spake to the huntsman, 'For your lord! Take this to him; it is what is called the stake-gift.' . . . Then they set Tristram on a horse, and his pilgrims accompanied him, and he carried on a stake the head of the stag. . . . Tristram and the troop of huntsmen did not cease blowing their horns till they had come before the king himself, and the huntsmen then told the king how Tristram had divided the stag, and how he had served the hounds, and told of the 'stake-gift', and how they should bring the spoils before their lord and king with sound of horns."

For some unknown reason M. Bédier omits from his reconstruction of Thomas the detail that the pilgrims went with Tristram to Mark's court, for which the Saga furnishes authority, as well as the tile.

## FIGURE 4

The tile shows a crowned, bearded man reclining on a couch, and a youth seated at the foot, playing a harp. There can be no question that we have here Tristram playing before King Mark.

After Tristram's skill in the art of venerye had won him the introduction at Mark's court depicted in the previous figure, he wins the further favor of the king by his musical attainments. The evening



FIG. 3. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM PRESENTED TO MARK



FIG. 4. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM HARPS BEFORE MARK



FIG. 5. AFTER SHURLOCK  
THE PORTER OPENS TO ROALD (?)



FIG. 6. AFTER SHURLOCK  
THE LORDS OF ERMENIE DO HOMAGE TO TRISTRAM

after his arrival he recognizes a Breton song that is being played, and is invited by the harper to exhibit what he has learned of the art. The Saga, ch. XXII, continues: "Then Tristram took the harp and sounded all its strings and gave the king and all his folk so sweet a tune that the king like all the other hearers had great esteem thereof. . . . Then said the king to him, 'Worthy friend! . . . thou shalt be in my chamber by night, and soothe me with thy cunning harping, when I lie awake.' "

This design should be compared with an illumination from the *Lives of the Offas*, figured in Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. LXIII, 1. The figure of Tristram resembles that of a harper in the *Vie de St. Thomas*, published by the Société des Anciens Textes Français, fol. 3r, and that in Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 24.

#### FIGURE 5

We have here a battlemented building with a large doorway: one leaf of the door is shown, covered with reinforcements of iron scroll work. In the doorway is a man, with a coif on his head, holding a large key. This is probably the porter of Mark's castle opening to Roald.

The Saga relates that Roald, after Tristram was carried away by the merchants, set out to seek him far and wide, and after many years' wandering learned that he was at the court of Cornwall. Thither he repaired but hesitated to make himself known because of his tattered garments. The Saga, ch. XXIII, tells us that at length "he went to one side to a door, called a porter to him and gave a gift to let him enter. When the porter saw the gift, he opened the door, took him by the hand, and led him further into the hall."

#### FIGURE 6

This tile, which is considerably defaced, shows a young man, with a shallow, peaked cap tied under his chin, taking between his two hands the joined hands of a kneeling figure; a third man, standing, holds up his joined hands in similar fashion. There can be little doubt that we have here the lords of Ermenie doing homage to Tristram.

When King Mark has learned from Roald that Tristram is his nephew, he makes him his heir and supports his claim to the lordship of Ermenie. On his landing there, Roald summons all of Tristram's vassals. To quote from ch. XXIV: "When the dukes and lords, the vavasours and noble knights appeared, Tristram received their allegiance and caused them to take the oath of loyalty."



FIG. 7. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM APPROACHES



FIG. 8. AFTER SHURLOCK

DUKE MORGAN (?)

Shurlock's identification is based on st. CI of *Sir Tristrem*, which has no parallel in the Saga and is therefore lacking in authenticity.

Compare this tile with similar designs in Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. XXXIX, 2, and XLVI, 2.

#### FIGURES 7 AND 8

The first of these figures depicts a young man, wearing a peaked coif, and a coat which falls to his knee, girt with a sword, equipped with prick spurs, striding forward with hands raised before him as if counting on his fingers. The second figure depicts a bearded man wearing a peaked pileus, sitting on a heavily cushioned seat, his right hand grasping a sceptre, his left twined in the cord of his mantle. The identification of these figures is doubtful, and there is no necessity for combining them. I suggest that possibly they represent Tristram approaching Duke Morgan, and the resemblance of the man in Fig. 8 to the certainly identified Duke Morgan in Fig. 9 seems to corroborate this view.

With twenty companions Tristram leaves the castle where he had first touched in Ermenie, and rides to claim his paternal domain from the usurper, Duke Morgan. The Saga, ch. XXIV, relates that "when Tristram entered the duke's hall, the whole court rising and listening, he addressed the duke in this wise."

Compare the seated figure with Strutt, *Horda*, pl. LXI and LI. The hat resembles one shown in the *Vie de St. Thomas*, fol. 4r.

#### FIGURE 9

The design shows a bearded man, clad in a mantle lined with vair, striking with the palm of his hand the face of a young man, who is in the act of drawing his sword. The former resembles the figure in the preceding design in the style of his cap and the twining of his left hand in the cord of his mantle. The identification in this case is certain: the subject is the quarrel between Tristram and Duke Morgan.

When Tristram demands his paternal domains, an angry colloquy takes place in the duke's hall. The Saga continues: "When the Duke heard Tristram's words, to wit, that he called him a liar, he sprang up at Tristram full of wrath and hate, and drove his fist with all his might full in his teeth."



FIG. 9. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM DRAWS UPON DUKE MORGAN



FIG. 10. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM KILLS DUKE MORGAN (?)



FIG. 11. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
THE BARONS LAMENT FOR THEIR SONS

## FIGURE 10

This square tile depicts a knight in mail, without a helm, grasping in his right hand a sword, and with his left seizing the head of a man in flowing robes and a peaked cap, who thrusts out his tongue and spreads his hands abroad in dismay. This, for lack of an apter identification, I suggest is the killing of Morgan by Tristram.

The passage describing the incident follows immediately upon that quoted in connection with the previous tile. "But Tristram straightway drew his sword, and brought it down on his head, and split it down to the eyes, and stretched him dead on the floor in sight of his whole court."

Shurlock's identification of this scene as the butchering of a Saracen to be served up to King Richard as a substitute for pork must be discarded since the tile is not, like the three tiles which are probably connected with Richard, round, baked in four quarters, and encircled by a white border line. Neither is there anything in the victim's costume to distinguish him as a Saracen. On the other hand, against my proposed identification stands the fact that the complete panoply which Tristram here wears does not appear in the previous plate, a marked variation from the usual consistency of costume observed by the designer in consecutive incidents. I can suggest, however, no more probable identification from the *Tristan* of Thomas.

## FIGURE 11

The tile shows two adults seated, one with a light beard, the other perhaps a woman: behind them stand three youths, of whom two are wringing their hands: the expressions of all are in the highest degree perturbed. At the feet of the older folk two boys with curly hair are squatted. The subject here represented is the lamentation of the barons of Cornwall at the prospect of separation from their sons.

On Tristram's return to Tintagel after his expedition against Morgan, he finds Mark's court in deep distress over the tribute demanded of them by the king of Ireland. The Saga, ch. XXVI, goes on to say: "Hither had all the noble ladies come with their sons, and those who were to be delivered up as truage to Ireland were about to be chosen by lot. . . . It is a sore affliction and grievous to think on that children of so high lineage should be given over to such bondage and thralldom. 'Lord God, long suffering art thou to let such things be; have pity on this heavy woe.' Noble men shed tears, women moaned and wailed, children screamed."

Compare the hands of the children in this design with those shown in Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. XLV, 2.

## FIGURE 12

This badly mutilated tile shows a group of figures kneeling, with hands upraised in supplication. Three seem to be adults, and two to be boys. There can be little doubt that we have here the barons of Cornwall and their sons imploring the drawers of lots to have mercy on them.

On Tristram's return to Tintagel after his expedition against Morgan, he finds Mark's court in deep distress over the tribute of boys demanded of them by the King of Ireland. Brother Robert says in ch. XXVI, "He (Tristram) walked into the hall and the castle, and as he had been sad before, now was he still more woeful, for he found the noblest men to be found in the kingdom, and they all were on their knees before those who were about to draw the lots and each prayed God to have mercy on him and save him from an unlucky lot."

## FIGURE 13

Here a crowned, bearded man is shown, holding a youth by the chin, and bending forward as if about to kiss him. I prefer to see in this tile Mark kissing Tristram after he has accepted the challenge of Morhaut.

When Tristram learns the cause of the misery he witnesses, he offers himself as champion of the rights of Cornwall to meet the Irish ambassador, Morhaut, in single combat, staking the tribute on the issue. Ch. XXVII of the Saga then begins thus: "Then spake the king, 'Gramercy, my dear nephew. Come hither and embrace me. If thou winnest back for us our freedom, thou shalt be heir to all my kingdom: no man is worthier than thou to receive it, for thou art the son of my sister's husband.' "

There can be little doubt that this and the following tile illustrate different moments in the same scene. Shurlock referred them both to the occasion when Mark learned from Roald of Tristram's close kinship, which is described in stanza LXVII of *Sir Tristrem* and ch. XXIV of the Saga. The latter and more authentic account mentions Mark alone as kissing and embracing Tristram. Figure 14, therefore, cannot be an illustration of this earlier scene, but must refer to the later scene when Tristram undertakes to uphold the rights of Cornwall. Since it implies the existence of a tile depicting the moment immediately preceding it, that is, Mark's embracing the hero, and since Figure 13 fills this requirement, I have arrived at the identification already stated.

Compare this design with that shown in Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. XXXIX, 2.



**FIG. 12. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
THE BARONS IMPORE MERCY**



**FIG. 13. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
MARK KISSES TRISTRAM**



**FIG. 14. AFTER SHURLOCK  
THE BARONS EMBRACE TRISTRAM**



**FIG. 15. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
MORHAUT WOUNDS TRISTRAM**

## FIGURE 14

This design is by no means complete. A youth embraces a person, whether man or woman I cannot say, who holds him by the chin as if about to kiss him. The head of another adult in a coif and the eyes of two other persons, presumably adults, are to be seen. To the left are the heads of three boys, distinguished as usual by their curly hair. The presence of the boys determines the identification of this scene as the barons and their sons expressing their gratitude to Tristram.

The Saga, ch. XXVII, immediately after giving the words of Mark cited above, continues: "Then Tristram stepped forth and kissed the king, his uncle, and all the vassals and knights who were there . . . and thereupon all, old and young, thanked him, and said that if he might vanquish their enemy and win back their freedom, they would all love and honor him as their lord, and serve him, since he was willing to be their protector."

## FIGURE 15

This represents a combat between two knights clad in chain mail, one bearing on his shield a lion rampant. They appear to be riding at each other, the knight on the left driving his blade into the thigh of the other. The scene is, of course, the combat between Morhaut and Tristram, when the hero is wounded in the thigh.

Brother Robert, after a description of the arming of the knights, which does not tally in detail with the armor which is here depicted, recounts in ch. XXVIII the progress of the battle. After they had broken their spears in the first shock, "they drew their swords and laid mighty blows upon each other so that the sparks flew from their helms, swords, and hauberks. . . . But Morhaut smote Tristram in a place which he left unprotected, for he held the shield far away from him, and the sword struck him in the left side, and the hauberk did not ward off the stroke, and he narrowly escaped being slain by Morhaut."

The lion on Tristram's shield raises an interesting question. M. Bédier on p. 61 of his reconstruction assigns to the hero as his cognizance a boar. He justifies this assignment by Gottfried's description of Tristram's shield and by the fact that in the Saga, ch. LI, Mariadoc has a dream of a boar, which is interpreted as Tristram. M. J. Loth, in the *Revue Celtique*, 1911, p. 297, without direct reference to Thomas, asserts that Gottfried did not invent the boar as an emblem for Tristram, but found it supplied by a lost French source. Unless the somewhat doubtful evidence of M. Bédier just cited be considered, M. Loth's hypothesis seems to be quite without foundation, and his interesting remarks on the boar as a Celtic cognizance are not relevant to our discus-

sion. It is strange that M. Bédier should have given so little weight to a piece of evidence which he quotes himself on the very page where he makes Tristram's emblem a boar. It is a passage from the Saga to the effect that Mark presented Tristram with a destrier covered with a red housing, on which the figures of lions were worked in gold thread. Now while we do not know that at the time when Thomas wrote knights were accustomed to deck their horse furniture with armorial emblems, such as at that period were just being defined, yet there is a strong suggestion in this passage that Tristram's arms were, in the phraseology of a later heraldry, gules a lion or. Besides the corroborative testimony of the Chertsey Tiles, we have the evidence of *Sir Tristrem*, which in describing the combat says that Morhaut "smot him in the lyoun, And Tristrem that was wight, Bar him thurch the dragoun in the scheld.' Before the force of these three witnesses, the single authority of Gottfried, never of the highest evidential value, must give way.

Prof. Lethaby has kindly communicated to me the excellent suggestion that Thomas by assigning to his hero this coat, gules a lion or, was approaching closely that of the royal house of England. When exactly the royal arms were defined we do not know, but the earliest of the royal seals to show them on the shield carried by the monarch is the first seal of Richard the Lion Heart, probably made in the opening year of his reign, 1189. Since the shield is there represented in profile, only one lion appears, but the fact that he faces to the right and the written testimony of Ambroise establish a strong probability that the first known royal shield of England bore two gold lions facing each other, or to use a technical term, counter-rampant.<sup>64</sup> It is not at all unlikely, then, that Thomas in assigning to his hero as an emblem the gold lion on a red ground intended a piece of flattery to the house of Plantagenet.

The attribution of the lion shield to Tristram seems to have continued through the centuries, for a list of King Arthur's knights in an edition of *Gyron le Courtois*, printed at Paris in 1500, reads, "Messire tristan de leonnois portoit de sinople a ung lyon dor arme et langue de gueulles." The *Tavola Ritonda*, however, expressly contradicts this. "E infra le dette insegne lo re fa porre un ricco pennone alle insegne di messer Tristano; cioe il campo azzurro, con una banda d'argento, con uno fregetto d'oro da ogni lato della banda. Ed alcuno vuole dire che Tristano porto per insegna il campo azurro con un leone ad oro; ma piu manifesta e questa di prima, che fosse la sua diritta arme."<sup>65</sup> King René in the *Livre du Cuer d'Amours Espris* describes Tristram's shield

<sup>64</sup>F. P. Barnard, *Companion to English History*, p. 123.

<sup>65</sup>Fd. F. L. Polidori, p. 513.



FIG. 16. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM KILLS MORHAUT



FIG. 17. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
MORHAUT IS CARRIED FROM THE FIELD



FIG. 18. AFTER SHURLOCK  
GORMON HASTENS TO VIEW MORHAUT'S BODY (?)

still otherwise, “d’or a une bande de pourpre.”<sup>66</sup> It is possible that like Thomas these other authors ascribed to Tristram certain family arms of their own day. Certainly this was the case with the Sicilian coverlets mentioned on p. 10, where Tristram carries on his shield the three horns of the Guicciardini.

#### FIGURE 16

Here the same two knights that are depicted in the previous tile appear again. The knight with the lion shield has now driven his sword deep into the helm of his enemy, who leans limply forward, his sword-arm dropping to his side. This tile illustrates, of course, the fatal blow which Tristan gives Morhaut.

Of this the Saga, ch. XXVIII, gives the following account. “All (the spectators) were sore grieved and distressed in mind, men as well as women, when they saw his (Tristram’s) steed all bebled, and prayed God to deliver him from pain and peril. Tristram heard their words and noted likewise that Morhaut was about to attack him; and he swung his sword with all his might, and smote down on the top of his helm. The iron gave way, the steel offered no defense, the mail cap availed not, and the sword cut away his hair and beard and lay lodged in his skull and brains.”

#### FIGURE 17

The tile shows two figures wearing coifs, bearing away the body of a knight clad in helm and mail. This is without doubt Morhaut’s corpse carried from the scene of combat.

Brother Robert in ch. XXVIII recounts the episode briefly: “Then Tristram bade the messenger bear his (Morhaut’s) body to Ireland, and moreover to say that they should get no tribute from England, neither gold nor silver, other than this offering. Then the men of Ireland took his body and bore it with great sorrow down the shore to his tent.”

#### FIGURE 18

Here we have a single figure, bearded, wearing a crown, and, to judge by his expression, much agitated. He is running, raising his right hand, and with his left gathering up his robe. The subject is doubtful, but may be Gormon’s distress on the arrival of Morhaut’s body.

<sup>66</sup>Ed. Quatrebarbe, p. 114.

The Saga relates in ch. XXIX that after the vessel touched at Dublin, "the messengers took up the corpse and bore it up to the castle, and all the vassals ran to meet them in order to see the dead knight . . . . When the king saw the dead Morhaut, he sighed from the bottom of his heart and was overcome with horror."

#### FIGURE 19

A youth is here depicted lying on a bed, raising his hands in supplication to a crowned personage sitting at the foot of the bed, who gesticulates with one hand, while with the other he holds the hem of his robe to his nose. Behind the sick man's head is a cushion. This tile is clearly a representation of Mark's visit to Tristram, when the youth is suffering from the wound dealt by Morhaut's poisoned sword.

The scene is described in ch. XXX of the Saga. "Then the wound gave Tristram such great torment that he would rather have been dead than live in such great agony. Never did he enjoy quiet or sleep, for the poison had entered his bones and flesh, and his kinsmen and friends were loth to sit by him because of the stench that went forth from him. Then Tristram spake to the king: 'Lord, I pray thee of thy good favor, give me some solace in my wretched life. . . . None of my kinsfolk or friends will come to me longer, to visit or comfort me, and therefore I desire to journey hence, whithersoever God may suffer me to go according to His divine grace and my need.' "

#### FIGURE 20

The tile depicts a man lying propped up in a boat on the water, with coverings over head and body, plucking with his hands the strings of a harp. There can be no question that this represents Tristram adrift in the rudderless boat, solacing himself with his harp.

The situation occurs when, in fulfilment of the wish expressed on his sickbed, Tristram is set out in a boat off the coast of Cornwall, taking his harp to give him relief in his suffering. The Saga in giving an account of the voyage says in ch. XXX: "Now they were driven about on the sea by storm and billows so long that they did not know where they were: at last, however, they reached Ireland." Since, however, the Saga mentions no companions before the voyage or during the visit in Ireland or on the return, it is likely that the vague "they" referred to is a mistranslation of some impersonal construction. This view is

<sup>67</sup>Thomas, *Tristan*, I, p. 145, note.



FIG. 19. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
MARK VISITS THE WOUNDED TRISTRAM



FIG. 20. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM DRIFTS IN THE RUDDERLESS BOAT



FIG. 21. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM TEACHES ISOLT TO HARP

confirmed by the testimony of the Oxford *Folie Tristan*, according to M. Bédier, a reliable index to the original version of Thomas.<sup>67</sup> The *Folie* attributes to Tristram these words describing the voyage:

“En mer me mis, la voil murir, Tant par m'ennuat le languir.”	ll. 343 f.
“Od ma harpe me delitoie Je n'oi confort, ke tant amoie.”	ll. 353 f.

Furthermore, the inscription, SANS GOVERNAIL, may well have been taken directly from Thomas. As against the testimony of the *Folie Tristan* and the Chertsey Tiles the confused version of the Saga, the obviously elaborated version of Gottfried, and the version of the garbled *Sir Tristrem* cannot stand. I, therefore, believe M. Bédier mistaken in adopting the version of *Sir Tristrem* and giving Tristram Govenal as a companion on the voyage.

#### FIGURE 21

This tile shows us a man, wearing a cap with a curious horn-like projection, who is handing over a harp to a lady seated near him. This, I believe, represents Tristram teaching Isolt to play the harp.

After Tristram's wound has been healed by the ministrations of the Queen of Ireland, the hero undertakes in return to instruct her daughter Isolt. In ch. XXX of the Saga we find these few lines devoted to the subject: “Then Trantris (the name Tristram had assumed in the country of his mortal foes) gave himself up with all assiduity, night and day to teaching Isolt to play the harp and all other stringed instruments, to write and compose letters, and to be cunning in all other possible arts.”

Dr. Shurlock on p. 25 of his book explains this tile as follows: “Tristram disguises himself as a court fool, feigns madness, and having obtained an interview with Ysonde, reveals himself by singing songs he had taught her.” There is no scene in Thomas where Tristram disguises himself as a court fool and gaining access to the queen plays the harp to her. In the one poem in which Tristram makes himself known to her as a minstrel, his instrument is a vielle.<sup>68</sup>

Compare the figures in Strutt's *Horda*, pl. XXVI, 1.

<sup>67</sup>Thomas, *Tristan*, I, p. 145, note.

<sup>68</sup>*Tristan Ménestrel*, Romania, XXXV, p. 497.



FIG. 22. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM RIDES UP TO TINTAGEL (?)



FIG. 23. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM ENCOUNTERS



FIG. 24. AFTER SHURLOCK

THE DRAGON



FIG. 25. RECONSTRUCTED FROM SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM OFFERS HIS



FIG. 26. AFTER SHURLOCK

GAGE TO GORMON

## FIGURE 22

The tile depicts a company of young men riding, two of them wearing hoods. The romance naturally contains many accounts of knights riding to and fro, and I can merely hazard a guess at the particular account here illustrated. Perhaps Tristram's ride up to Tintagel after his return to Ireland is as probable as any.

The event is described in ch. XXXII of the Saga: "He now left the ship, and they led before him a great strong destrier: he mounted it and rode home to the castle."

Shurlock's identification of the tile as "Knights bringing Tristram and Ysonde to court from the forest" must be discarded, first, because we have no reason to believe that Thomas even mentions the actual return and second, because I cannot detect among the riders one appareled like a woman. The inscription which Shurlock attaches to this plate (No. 36) consists of two parts, which should not be joined in this misleading way and translated as "Morgan and his attendants return to England." There are two subjects while the verb *turne* is singular: and further, Morgan is never mentioned as going to England.

## FIGURES 23 AND 24

The first of what is probably a pair of tiles represents an armed knight riding with spear in *feutre*. The second tile, which came from Halesowen, is in great part effaced, but enough remains to show a large, swollen, worm-like beast with two clawed feet appearing, and with two heads, which threaten with open jaws some approaching enemy. These tiles probably illustrate Tristram's encounter with the dragon.

According to the Saga, when Tristram arrived in Dublin to seek the hand of Isolt on behalf of his uncle Mark, he found the city so terrorized by a dragon that the King of Ireland had promised his daughter in marriage to the destroyer of the monster, whoever he might be. Tristram secretly prepared for the adventure, and when he heard the alarm, sallied forth to battle. To quote from ch. XXXVI of the Saga: "He looked now before him, and saw how the dragon came stalking, with head lifted high, with bulging eyes and protruding tongue, and how he vomited on all sides venom and fire, so that he destroyed with his fire every living thing that came near him. As soon as the dragon descried Tristram, he roared and puffed himself up. But Tristram gathered all his courage that he might prove his hardihood, gave his destrier the spurs, held his shield before him and thrust the spear down its mouth with such terrible force and fury that all the teeth of the dragon which the lance met flew wide from his head: the iron pierced at once through his heart and ran out at his belly, so that Tristram lodged a piece of the shaft in the body and neck of the beast."

## FIGURES 25 AND 26

The first tile is a reconstruction from Shurlock's pl. 3 and a fragment at the British Museum. It depicts a young man, girt with a sword, who has one hand at his hip and with the other holds up a glove. The second tile shows a crowned personage, holding a sceptre in the left hand and seeming to take a glove with his right. I incline to the belief that we have here Tristram offering his gage to Gormon as undertaking to prove the falsehood of the steward.

There are two occasions, however, on which Tristram undertook the wager by battle by giving up his glove to a king. The first is that when Morhaut came to Cornwall to demand the tribute of King Mark, and Tristram offered to dispute the claim. Ch. XXVII begins, "Then the king spake, 'Gramercy, my dear nephew: come hither and embrace me.' . . . Then Tristram stepped forward and kissed the king, his uncle, and all the vassals and knights who were there. Tristram handed over to the king his glove in order to pledge himself thereby to the single combat with Morhaut."

The other occasion that this tile may depict takes place after the slaying of the dragon. The steward of the Irish king claims the exploit and in consequence the princess for himself, and when Tristram rises and disputes the claim, challenges him to combat. Tristram rises and accepts the challenge. At this point I quote from the Saga, ch. XLII: "Then spake the king, 'Fix the combat between you by clasp of hand, and give us pledges and sureties that what is now agreed on shall be observed.' Then Tristram handed over to the king his glove as pledge." My choice as between these two possible scenes is founded solely on the expression of the king's face, which as it is one of surprise rather than of pleasure, seems more appropriate to the latter scene.

Shurlock's identification of 25 as Roald is disproved by the youthfulness of the man. Furthermore, there is no mention of a glove when Roald is admitted to Tintagel castle.

A fragment of Tile 26 (at the British Museum) is unique in bearing an inscription on its face. It shows the upper left hand corner, with the uplifted hand and glove. In the first line we have :G:, in the second ANNO, in the third the upper half of the following :OR (or P) IE. I have been unable to make anything of this: a discovery of the remaining fragments of this unique tile might determine the date and other important facts in regard to the tiles.

The king's figure should be compared with those shown in Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. LVII, 2, in the *Vie de St. Thomas*, fol. 4r, and in Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 22.

## FIGURE 27

The half-tile here illustrated shows a young man, with a fillet round his hair, holding out in his right hand a covered goblet or hanap. This is, of course, Tristram presenting the love philtre to Isolt. The inscription, which is here reproduced from Shurlock's plate, does not relate to the tile.

After Tristram has established his claim to Isolt, he announces that he has come to secure her as the bride of Mark, and sets sail with her for Cornwall. Bringvain, her maid, has been entrusted with a love potion which is to be given the royal bride and groom the night of their wedding. The Saga, ch. XLVI, relates: "Now Tristram sailed on and the weather was fair, and because the heat was sore he thirsted exceedingly and longed to drink some wine. At once a page sprang and filled a vessel from the keg which had been given into Bringvain's care. When Tristram had taken the vessel, he drank half of it and let the lady drink the rest which was still in the cup: and now are they both possessed by the potion which they have drunk."

Shurlock takes this figure to be Bringvain. Against this must be set the fact that the Saga and the version of the Oxford *Folie Tristran* ascribe to Bringvain no part in the tragic blunder and the additional fact that the hair is like that of Tristram in Figures 3 and 19.

## FIGURE 28

This figure shows a person clad in a coif and a tunic that comes down to his knee, ascending a ladder into a ship; and in the ship a woman, her head covered with a hood and hat, who raises her finger at the man. I believe that the moment here depicted is that when Isolt, on her way to the trial by red hot iron, signals Tristram to carry her ashore.

Brother Robert relates that after her marriage Isolt, being suspected of infidelity, was adjudged to endure the trial by red hot iron. He continues in ch. LVIII: "When, now, the fixed day drew nigh, Isolt bethought herself of a subterfuge and sent word to Tristram that on the day appointed him he should meet her at a shallow in the river, after rendering himself as unrecognizable as he might. When she must needs be set across the water, she would cause him to carry her from the boat, and then she would impart a secret to him. So he diligently ordered it that on the day named he should be near her, so wholly disguised that no one should perceive who he was. His face was smeared over and over with yellow color, and he was clad in a shabby woollen coat, over which an old mantle was drawn. Then the queen on the other



FIG. 27. AFTER SHURLOCK  
TRISTRAM PRESENTS THE POTION TO ISOLT



FIG. 28. AFTER SHURLOCK  
ISOLT SIGNALS TO TRISTRAM

side of the stream entered the boat; forthwith she made Tristram a sign ere the boat brought her to land. Then she cried to Tristram with a loud voice: 'Friend, come hither and carry me from the boat. Thou art likely to be a stout mariner.' Right so, Tristram came to the boat and took her in his arms."

There are two objections to this identification. The first is that the description of costume given and the fact that a few lines after the quoted passage Isolt says of the disguised Tristram that he is a pilgrim do not harmonize with the costume depicted on the tile. Furthermore, Prof. Lethaby objects in a private communication that "the figure approaching seems delicately girlish and not fit to carry off the fat lady." The first objection is, in my opinion, of little weight since a comparison of Figure 15 with ch. XXVIII of the Saga shows that the tile designer did not aim at a careful reproduction of the details of costume afforded by Thomas. Prof. Lethaby's objection seems to me not adequately borne out by the features of the design itself. The figure ascending the ladder does not appear particularly girlish, and the costume rules out the possibility of its being a female. At least, I have yet to come across the portrayal of a thirteenth century woman of station wearing a coif or a short-cut tunic. Both the headgear and the dress are distinctively masculine. As for the figure in the boat, it seems to me hazardous to estimate the avoirdupois of a person in so full a hood and cloak. The supposition that it represents Isolt in heavy traveling apparel is surely not absurd.

In his article for the Walpole Society volume, Prof. Lethaby offers an alternative identification of the tile. He says, "It is certainly Iseult embarking to go to the assistance of Tristram. The second figure is Brangwin." In a private communication he writes, "As to the identifications the best point of departure is 16 together with 26." (Shurlock's numbering: 28 and 29 in the present work.) "It seems to me certain as anything in the language of art can be that the two people in 16 (28) are the same as the two middle people in 26 (29). . . . Taking 16 and 26 together, these two persons can only be explained as Iseult and Brangwin." I have already put forward reason for not accepting the figure ascending the ladder as Isolt. Furthermore, it seems to me that the objection which Prof. Lethaby has brought against accepting the person in the boat as Isolt tells equally against Bringvain. For if the person be plump, she cannot be Bringvain, who passed herself off in the bridal bed of Mark as the young queen.

Is it possible, however, relabeling the male figure Kaherdin and the female figure Isolt, still to refer the tile to the scene of embarkation for Brittany? Apart from the fact that the embarkation is of slight importance and cursorily recounted by Thomas,<sup>69</sup> there are two objections of

<sup>69</sup>ll. 2787 ff.

weight. One is the fact that Bringvain, as essential a figure as Kaherdin, is omitted. The other is Thomas's statement that the party embarked into a little boat by a postern in the wall above the Thames, a proceeding which would not require the ladder. Accordingly, I adhere to my original identification.

#### FIGURE 29

This tile represents a boat with sail hoisted on the water, and a man with an oar rowing in the bow. Three other persons sit in the boat: one, wearing a round, narrow-brimmed hat with a tassel, sits in the stern; another wearing a coif sits opposite the first and gesticulates; and the third, clad much as Isolt is clad in the preceding figure, faces the rower and gesticulates. Prof. Lethaby's patient reasonings have convinced me that this can represent but one voyage, and that, Isolt's voyage to see the dying Tristram.

The particular occasion would be that described in Thomas's *Tristan*, II, 2971-3005, which I here translate: "Then the wind fell and the weather grew fair; they have hoisted the white sail, and sail with great speed till Kaherdin espies Brittany. Then are they joyful and glad and draw the sail full high so that afar one might descry whether it were white or black . . . While they were sailing merrily, the heat arose and the wind fell until they could not sail. Full still and smooth is the sea. The ship moves nor hither nor thither save as the waves draw it, and they have no longer their boat: now is there great distress . . . Up and down they drift, now back, now forward . . . Isolt is thereby greatly tormented: she sees the land she has coveted, and yet she may not win to it: never a whit does her desire abate. Often Isolt calls herself wretched. They yearn that the ship may touch the shore, yet they no longer see it."

That the oarsman is in the bow is proved by the direction in which the points of the oarholes are cut. A comparison with the last plate of the *Vie de St. Thomas* and Strutt's *Horda*, I, pl. LXIV, 2, indicates that these points are always directed toward the stern. The figure facing the oarsman is, I believe, after comparison with the preceding tile, Isolt. She is perhaps urging the man at the oar to row them to the land, which is so tantalizingly near. The next figure is distinguished by his coif as a man, and therefore can be no other than Kaherdin. The person in the stern is therefore Bringvain, as young and almost as fair, be it remembered, as Isolt herself.

Shurlock speaks of Isolt in this scene as disguised as a man, but the basis for this error is a passage invented by Sir Walter Scott as a conclusion to his edition of *Sir Tristrem*. Thomas himself mentions nothing of the kind.



FIG. 29. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
ISOLT VOYAGES TO SEE TRISTRAM



FIG. 30. AFTER SHURLOCK  
THE DIRGE IS SUNG OVER TRISTRAM



FIG. 31



FIG. 32

DEL. WATERHOUSE

FIG. 31. TRISTRAM LEARNS THE PRACTISE OF ARCHERY (?)

FIG. 32. A HUNTSMAN BLOWS HIS HORN (?)

## FIGURE 30

The tile represents a funeral bier covered with hangings. Two candles stand at the head and two at the feet of the dead. Two priests are chanting the dirge: one has a lectern before him and a book, in which are the words DIRIGE DOMINE; the other holds a book, in which the letters CC appear. To Prof. Lethaby I am again indebted for leading me to identify this with the dirge sung over Tristram's bier.

Tristram, hearing from his wife, Isolt of the White Hands, the lie that the approaching ship bears a black sail, and convinced thereby that Isolt of Ireland no longer loves him, dies. Thomas in ll. 3046 f. says, "Knights and sergeants pass forth and bear the body from its bed, then lay it down on a cloth of samite, and cover it with a pall of ray."

## FIGURE 31

This fragment at the British Museum depicts two boys (always distinguishable on these tiles by their curly hair) and the hand of a third figure. The boy on the right is gesticulating as if to a fourth person. The boy on the left has his arms crossed, holding in his right hand a bow, and in the other an arrow. This I identify as Tristram and his foster brothers learning the practice of archery.

It will be remembered that after the death of Kanelangres (Rivalen) his marshal, Roald, protected and brought up as his own son the young Tristram. Though no direct mention is made in chap. XVII of the Saga of instruction in archery, yet it seems to me not unlikely that Brother Thomas is here condensing, and in this impression M. Bédier concurs.<sup>70</sup>

Compare this detail with Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 20.

## FIGURE 32

This fragment, also at the British Museum, is from a square tile and shows the usual pilaster ornament at the side. On it appears about three quarters of the figure of a man, his head covered with a coif, his left hand raising to his mouth a horn, which is attached to a cord about his neck. Near his head the cap of another figure is visible. That we have here one of the huntsmen whom Tristram met after being set ashore by the merchants seems probable, but just what point in the adventure is intended there seems no way of determining.

In the Saga there is no mention of horn blowing till in ch. XXII the troop of huntsmen on horseback approach Mark's palace. Since the

<sup>70</sup>Thomas, *Tristan*, I, p. 29, note.

figure on the tile is not mounted, the scene depicted must be an earlier one. M. Bédier in a note on p. 47 records his impression that the Scandinavian translator found the technical terms and details of venerye wearisome, and abbreviated freely throughout this passage, and since Gottfried describes the huntsmen as blowing their horns at once on the death of the stag, it is quite possible that Thomas may have done so as well, and that this fragment of a tile preserves a record of that detail.

### FIGURE 33

The fragment at the British Museum shows parts of the figures of three men in long robes. One wears a belt, and the hilt of a sword appears at his thigh. Another wears a coif and bears a mace. This last feature has suggested to me that these figures may be the ambassadors of the King of Ireland before Mark.

Although no direct mention is made in chap. XXVII of the Saga of any ambassadors before Mark besides Morhaut, yet scenes XI and XII on the Sicilian coverlet at South Kensington show Morhaut himself holding the official mace of an ambassador, before he was sent in that capacity to Cornwall.<sup>71</sup> Since the lost Italian version on which the coverlet is based could not have followed Thomas closely at this point, we can not regard it as furnishing more than a starting point for guesswork, and I can claim only conjectural value for my identification of this fragment.

### FIGURE 34

This fragment at the British Museum shows us a boat with a bit of its mast and a bit of the clothing of an occupant; and to the right a young man, wading away from the boat, gathering up his robe with one hand and with the other holding forth a glove. If this figure is Tristram, as seems not unlikely, I know of no landing of his which corresponds better to the illustration than that on his return to Cornwall with a bride for King Mark.

The Saga mentions the incident in ch. XLVI: "None the less they sailed toward the land, and landed in a good haven . . . Then the king rode down to the strand."

We have now finished our examination of the tiles and fragments belonging to the Tristram series. We now pass on to those which are distinguished from the Tristram series by peculiarities of manufacture, namely the baking in quarters and the encircling white line. The first three I take to illustrate two of the best known legends concerning

<sup>71</sup>*Romania*, 1913, pl. facing p. 519 and p. 537.



FIG. 33. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
AMBASSADORS APPEAR BEFORE MARK (?)



FIG. 34. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
TRISTRAM LANDS IN CORNWALL (?)



FIG. 35. AFTER SHURLOCK  
RICHARD TEARS OUT THE LION'S HEART

Richard Coeur de Lion, which, as I have already set forth, were incorporated in the early part of the fourteenth century in the Middle English romance of Richard. In what precise form they were known to the tile designer we are ignorant.

#### FIGURE 35

On this tile we have depicted a youth, with a circlet round his hair and a dagger at his waist, sitting astride a lion, whose jaws he is rending open. The subject I take to be Richard tearing the heart from the lion. The encircling white line which I know to have surrounded this design was omitted by Shurlock's artist.

The episode as it is recounted in the Middle English romance probably differs considerably from that used by the designer; still to it as our only source we must have recourse. The minstrel of southern Lincolnshire whom we know to have been responsible for these fabulous parts as they stand in the romance, by an odd anachronism places Richard's imprisonment by the "king of Almayn" before the Crusade. Richard strives while in durance to break the head of the king's son, who has challenged him to an exchange of buffets, and to lie with the king's infatuated daughter. The king, to relieve himself of the responsibility of shedding royal blood, lets a starved lion into Richard's cell. But Richard's ladylove forewarns him, and he takes measures to meet the situation. According to the *b* version, he asks her,

"Do me haue kerchyues of selke,  
Ffourty, whyte as any mylk,  
And a scharpe Irissh knyf,  
As thow wolde saf my lyf."

MS. A, ll. 1035-1036/2, p. 134.

Richard prepares himself by wrapping one arm up in the forty handkerchiefs and putting the knife ready to his other hand.

"The chambre dore they hadde vndo,  
And the lyon ladde him too.  
When the lyon sey him skete,  
He ramped on with his fete,  
He yoned wyde and ganne to rage,  
As wilde best that was sauage.  
And kyng Ric. also sket  
Jn the lyones throte his arme he shete,  
All in kerchese his arme was wonde,  
The lyon he strangeled in that stonde."

MS. A, ll. 1057/21-30, pp. 137 f.

It must be recognized that there is but little coincidence of detail between the romance and the tile design. One might properly ask, "Why cannot we accept the figures as representing the familiar struggle, called by medievals 'Samson Fortin', where Samson is depicted straddling the lion and rending open its jaws in just this way?" I reply that among these tiles there is none representing a Scriptural subject, whereas we have at least one subject certainly derived from the Richard tradition. We know furthermore that the *Coeur de Lion* episode was sufficiently popular by 1300 to be painted in the Peterborough Psalter.<sup>72</sup> Finally, even though the dagger here be not exactly the Irish knife mentioned, there is a good possibility of its corresponding to some edged tool in a variant of the story, but it has no place whatever in an illustration of Samson's struggle. As between "Samson Fortin" and Richard and the lion heart the latter seems to be more probable.

The figure may be compared with that of Samson in the *Psautier de St. Louis*, pl. LVI. There is a striking resemblance between Richard's costume, including the fillet and the dagger, and that of a figure in the *Vie de St. Thomas*, fol. 3v.

#### FIGURES 36 AND 37

The first of these figures shows a knight in mail, wearing a crowned helm and bearing a shield on which the heads of three heraldic lions appear. He rides a gallop, and rests his lance on his horse's head between the ears. The second figure, of which one of the quarters is lost, depicts a man with a short beard, wearing a tasseled cap and tunic but no armor, borne back in his saddle by a spear, the head of which appears at his back. His left hand clasps a sword with slightly curved blade. His steed is falling forward on its knees; the saddle has slipped sideways, and the rider's foot has lost the stirrup. These figures, without doubt, depict Richard's overthrow of Saladin in single combat.

The passage in the Middle English romance of *Richard Coeur de Lion* which gives an elaborate version of the encounter extends from l. 3481 to 5797.<sup>73</sup> Saladin, the chief Sowdan of heatheness, sends a challenge to Richard to meet him in single combat to determine which is of more power, Jesus or Juppiter. He sends him also the offer of a mount for the combat. Richard accepts both the challenge and the offer. Saladin then bids a necromancer conjure two fiends into the shape of a mare and her colt. The latter, which becomes uncontrollable when its mother neighs, and kneels beside her for suck, he despatches

<sup>72</sup>*Publications of the Mod. Lang. Assoc.*, XXX, p. 520.

<sup>73</sup>References throughout are to *Richard Löwenherz*, ed. K. Brunner, *Wiener Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie*, vol. XLII.

to Richard, and keeps the dam as his own mount. Richard, however, is warned of the intended treachery by an angel, who instructs him to procure a tree forty feet long and to truss it overthwart the colt's mane. He further bids Richard bridle the beast, and gives him a spear-head of steel warranted to pierce the stoutest armor. Richard exceeds the angel in caution. Not only does he bridle the colt, but he rigs the tree across his saddle bow and carefully fastens it with iron chains, stuffs the colt's ears with wax to prevent its hearing its mother's neighing, and finally conjures it in the seven names of God to serve him at his will. By way of further preparation, he hangs a mace and an ax before his saddle, takes a shield of steel "With three lupardes wrought fful weel," and clothes himself in plate and a helm crested with the dove of the Holy Spirit, perched upon a crucifix. After arranging the terms of the combat, Richard leaps into his saddle and to the noise of trumps and tabors, bears down upon the Sowdan. The latter, expecting Richard's steed to betray him, carries only a falchion and a shield blazoned with a "serpent." But the colt cannot hear its mother's neighing, and carries Richard furiously toward the encounter. At the shock Saladin's bridle and poitrel, girth and stirrups give way. The mare sinks to the ground, and the Sowdan is shot

"Bakward ouyr his meres croupe,  
His feet toward the ffyrmamente.  
Behynde hym the spere out wente."

It will be observed that many details of Richard's equipment are not depicted in the tile design, and this fact probably points to a less elaborate account as the basis for the design. Particularly interesting is the fact that the mere placing of the spear between the colt's ears shown in the tile may represent the first simple form of the story out of which grew, first, the angel's instruction to truss the tree overthwart the colt's mane, and then, the complex arrangements for bracing and chaining the tree on the iron saddle-bow.

Furthermore, as I have observed in the *Publications of the Modern Language Associations*, XXX, p. 515, this simpler early version of the encounter was probably indebted to an artistic tradition for some of its details, namely, the fall of the Saracen's horse and the falchion. For we find them represented in a medallion of stained glass dating from the first half of the twelfth century which until the French Revolution stood in the windows of St. Denis, and which although destroyed at that time is known to us through the copy found in Monfaucon's *Monumens de la Monarchie Française*, vol. I, pl. LIII.

The popularity of the overthrow of Saladin as an art motif is evi-



FIG. 36. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
RICHARD COEUR DE LION



FIG. 37. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
OVERTHROWS SALADIN

denced by two portrayals of it in the fourteenth century, both figured in my article in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association*. One is an illumination in an East Anglian Psalter of the year 1340 or thereabouts. The other is a half obliterated painting on a chest in Burgate church, Suffolk. Furthermore, in two early fourteenth century psalters there are illuminations of combats between a Christian knight and a Saracen which clearly show the influence of this motif and testify to its popularity.

The next six figures seem to have, as I have already remarked, no connection with any literary sources. They are to be regarded as simple *genre* subjects.

#### FIGURE 38

We have represented here the judicial combat or wager of battle. The participants are two youths, with hair cropped peculiarly, clad in light tunics. Their arms are a square buckler and a baston or short bladed pick.

Shurlock supposed that this is intended to depict the combat between Tristram and the seneschal of the King of Ireland which was agreed upon but never took place. The fact that the tile is made up of four quarters disposes of that conjecture.

Shurlock, on p. 25, quotes from ancient documents some interesting rules for such combats, rules which prescribed the length of the bastons, the shape of the bucklers, and the cropping of the hair "à la reonde." He reproduces from the Miscellaneous Rolls of Henry III the drawing of a combat between Walter Blowberne and Haman le Stare, similar in all its features to the tile design. George Neilson, in his *Trial by Combat*, has collected a number of medieval notices of such judicial duels, and on pp. 53 ff. notes the various prescriptions as to costume. He seems quite mistaken in his conclusion stated on p. 56,—which he admits is contrary to all the pictorial evidence,—that the heads of the champions were completely shaved. Besides the figures given by Shurlock, he refers to the well-known brass of Bishop Wyvil at Salisbury cathedral, in which the bishop's champion is represented standing in the gateway of Sherborne castle, which he had won for his master by his victory.<sup>74</sup> Neilson also refers to the signet of Henry of Fernburg, a famous fighter, which dates from 1258.<sup>75</sup> The baston is shown in the hands of a knightly effigy, which lies at Great Malvern Priory church.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup>Waller, *A Series of Monumental Brasses*, pl. 9.

<sup>75</sup>Upton, *Notes*, p. 37.

<sup>76</sup>Stothard, *Monumental Effigies*.



FIG. 38. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
A JUDICIAL COMBAT



FIG. 39. AFTER SHURLOCK  
A MOUNTED ARCHER



FIG. 40. AFTER SHURLOCK  
A MOUNTED KNIGHT WITH CROSSBOW



FIG. 41. AFTER SHAW  
A MOUNTED KNIGHT AND LION



FIG. 42. DEL. WATERHOUSE  
A MOUNTED YOUTH AND LION



FIG. 43. AFTER SHURLOCK  
A KNIGHT AND LION

## FIGURE 39

This tile depicts a bare-headed youth turning in his saddle as he rides a galloping horse: he holds in his left hand a bow, from which he has just discharged an arrow.

Compare this huntsman with that in Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 20.

## FIGURE 40

A knight in banded mail is shown riding a horse at full speed and leveling a crossbow against an unseen enemy in front of him. Shurlock's draughtsman has again as in Fig. 35 omitted the encircling white line.

## FIGURE 41

A knight is riding with sword raised over his head against a lion, which rears on its hind legs and claws the horse's head. The knight's shield bears the device of a carbuncle. Shurlock does not reproduce this, and I have met with no fragments. The sole authority is a plate in Shaw's somewhat inaccurate series of reproductions.

## FIGURE 42

We have here the figure of a man riding a galloping horse and driving a spear into the head of a lion, which has fastened his teeth and claws in the rump of the horse. Beneath the horse is a hound coursing. As Burges brought out in his comment,<sup>77</sup> the tile is remarkable in representing the rider as bare-legged and bare-armed, and riding without stirrups, and in omitting the nails in the horse's hoofs. These unusual features prove that the artist was imitating antique models. We have here then another of those curious indications, such as the sketch in Villard de Honnecourt's note-book,<sup>78</sup> the statues at Rheims, and the work of Niccolò Pisano, that medieval artists sometimes discovered and were lured into imitating the works of a bygone age.

Compare the hound in Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey*, Fig. 21.

## FIGURE 43

A lion rampant attacks a knight on foot, who interposes his shield blazoned with a chevron and prepares to deliver a blow with his sword. The cutter of the mould has forgotten to allow for the reversal of the design in the tile; the knight carries his shield on his right arm and wields his sword with his left. No particular significance is to be attached in my opinion to the charge on the shield.

<sup>77</sup>*Builder*, 1858, p. 502.

<sup>78</sup>Lassus, R. Willis, *Facsimile of Sketch Book of Wilars de Honnecourt*, pl. LVII.

## XI

The chief conclusions set forth in this study, some of them restatements of the findings of previous scholars, some of them the results of my own study, may best be divided into two classes, conclusions in regard to the tiles and conclusions in regard to their literary sources. As to the tiles, we may make safely the following statements:

1. They were made about the year 1270.
2. They give evidence of being executed at the instance of Henry III.
3. They show a resemblance to certain tiles in the pavement of Westminster chapter house.
4. They may be divided into two series, distinguished by slight differences in the manufacture and design.
5. They were accompanied by inscriptions, some in Anglo-Norman referring to the story of Tristram, some in Latin referring to the adventures of King Richard.

Upon the literary sources the tiles shed some light.

1. The source of the illustrations of the Tristram story was the Anglo-Norman romance by Thomas, now in large part lost.
2. The combined evidence of one tile and of the Norwegian translation of Thomas shows that Thomas assigned to Tristram a shield bearing a gold lion on a red field.
3. This fact affords a strong presumption that Thomas was thus paying a compliment to the royal house of England, and was probably under the patronage of Henry II. He would then have been one of that brilliant literary circle of which Henry's court was the centre, and may well have talked with Marie de France, Wace, and Giraldus Cambrensis, and if not with the Walter Map and Robert de Borron of the colophons, at least with poets who, whatever their names, were weaving the gorgeous tapestries of Arthurian romance.
4. The combined evidence of one tile and the *Folie Tristan* shows that Tristram's first voyage to Ireland as described by Thomas was a solitary drifting.
5. The source of the Richard incidents was probably one or more episodic poems, probably in Anglo-Norman, which later were translated and elaborated by a Lincolnshire minstrel and embodied in the Middle English romance of *Richard Coeur de Lion*.
6. In the case of the story of the encounter with Saladin, the motif of the treacherous gift of the horse had probably been prefixed to the motif of Saladin's overthrow in the source which was consulted by the tile designer.

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